



PROJECT BRIEFING | Business Events Industry Development

Background

Destination Sydney Surrounds South (DSSS) recognise the significant opportunity that is presented by business events and conferencing. The [NSW Regional Conferencing Strategy](#), developed by [Destination NSW's Regional Conferencing team](#), outlines that across regional NSW, the sector generates \$290 million in delegate expenditure plus an additional \$11.6 million from pre and post event activities, employing more than 2,300 people.

With a range of well-established venues, operators and event suppliers, our region is well placed to leverage the opportunities available through business events.

Research commissioned by DSSS into destination weddings and their value to the region's visitor economy in 2019, indicated there was approximately 343 venues across the region. With a total of over 2,100 suppliers and businesses contributing to this emerging sector including, accommodation, event services, food and beverage, and other support services.

While the region was experiencing an increase in mid-week and off-peak weddings, prior to the disruptions of 2020 (and ongoing impacts of Covid-19), the availability of these venues and suppliers presents a significant opportunity for the region to host business events Monday to Thursday. Increased utilisation of these venues through business events reduces seasonality, and provides reliable employment opportunities for local staff and greater economic impact for the region.

Project objective

The aim of this project is equip operators that could benefit from business events, with the skills and resources that will assist them in attracting these events to the region. This includes, developing a greater understanding of the event 'bidding' process, how to access grant funding for securing events, and increased awareness of attractions in the region to enable increased collaboration across the local visitor economy through experiential events as well as pre and post conference activities.

Project inclusions

The project is designed to support skills development and the sharing of resources with operators that could leverage the benefits of business events, either directly or indirectly.

Key project activities will include:

CHECKLIST

Development of a business events checklist for the DSSS region – a useful resource to have on hand when planning and bidding for business events.

MENTOR PROGRAM

Tailored one-on-one and small group coaching sessions provided over an 8-week period. A total of 15 places are available, the program will run over two rounds in 2022.

WORKSHOPS

A series of workshops to be held across the region. Hear from special industry guest speakers and learn from local case studies. These workshops are for new and seasoned business events venues and suppliers.



Project partners

To deliver this specialised project, DSSS is partnering with business events experts, [Mayvin Global](#).

Their experienced Project Team will include:

- [Deanna Varga](#), Managing Director and Founder
- [Lisa Kancans](#), Systems and Project Consultant *(based in the Southern Highlands)*
- [Dr Lynda Kelly](#), Events Measurement Expert *(based in the Southern Highlands)*
- [Suzanna Rickard](#), Project Coordinator
- [Dawn Gardiner](#), Venue Pricing and Modelling Expert *(based in the Southern Highlands)*
- [Carla Offord](#), from The Conference Shop *(based in the Southern Highlands)*

Next steps

Mayvin Global have been in touch with several key operators across the region for their thoughts on the development program. These insights will assist preparations over the coming months ahead of delivery in 2022.

The Mentor Program is set to run over two rounds, beginning in February and May respectively, expressions of interest to participate will open in coming weeks. Workshops will follow the Mentor Program and are planned closer to mid-year.



Key contacts

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Stay in touch for project updates, announcements will be made via our regular *Destination Download* industry updates - scan the QR code here to [join our mailing list](#), and also through our [LinkedIn](#) page.

Images: Mathematical Association of NSW Conference, Novotel Wollongong (front). Savvy Fitness, North Wollongong (back). Credit: Destination NSW. Back header image: DSSS Visitor Economy Symposium, May 2021.